

SPECTEMUR

AGENDO

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NEWCASTLE
GRAMMAR
SCHOOL

“Children thrive
in environments
that encourage
learning at their level ...





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FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

SCHOOL LEADERS



As my last *Spectemur Agendo* article, I am aware of the audience. Some of you are new to Newcastle Grammar School and we are yet to meet; others have been very much part of NGS for many years.

No matter where you fall along the spectrum, know that in 2023, you will find a dynamic school community of over 1,000 students that stands proudly as a beacon of excellence in education in the region. The new Strategic Plan that takes the School to

2025, focuses on further development of our student wellbeing model, staff growth and development and sustainability. The School's Masterplan, with the exciting Stage 1 development at Park Campus, is an investment in primary education for generations to come. My time as Head of School at NGS has coincided with three strategic plans and a masterplan to safeguard the School well into the future. These plans have already delivered significant changes to the School's wellbeing and co-curricular programmes, academic curriculum, professional practice and international offerings and provide blueprints for the future.

All indicators are that students will, once again, be able to travel abroad towards the end of 2023 to engage with our social justice project in Vietnam and embrace the opportunities of Round Square. This international focus

of the School is a critical part of a holistic education and the School is committed to providing more opportunities in a world where travel should prove easier. In addition, this generation of students is looking for more practical ways of engaging with environmental and sustainability issues. At the end of 2022, we were thrilled to be able to offer Year 10 and 11 students a chance to take part in our first Earthshot tour to northern Queensland to learn more about these issues and consider practical solutions.

The wider educational context continues to present challenges to all schools. The pandemic has accelerated technological integration in schools and a need for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education to meet requirements for future-focused work environments. Upper secondary students now have multiple pathways to consider with the rise of early entry offers to university and changed pathways to tertiary education. This is all taking place against a backdrop of crippling teacher shortages and a growth in student wellbeing and mental health challenges. Schools have significant responsibilities, and our community should be confident that the new Strategic Plan focuses on all these areas.

It has been a privilege to work with a dedicated Board and highly professional staff to lead NGS over the last eight years. I wish the School community the very best for this year and the years ahead.

Mrs Erica Thomas
Head of School

“ My time as Head of School at NGS has coincided with three strategic plans and a masterplan to safeguard the School well into the future. ”



FROM THE HEAD OF PRIMARY

SCHOOL LEADERS



Every student in our Primary School has their own pace and approach to learning. This is where differentiation comes into play.

Our teachers continue to commit to the process of getting to know each of their students well enough to understand how they learn and apply the best teaching approaches for that individual. It requires a true understanding by teachers, as well as a highly flexible pedagogical approach, to help maximise a student's ability to flourish.

Research has shown that differentiated teaching is a highly effective method, and we believe this approach is worth the deep commitment required to execute it well. Our students are presented with opportunities for exploring and learning new concepts in a manner they are most comfortable or familiar with. This leads to a greater level of involvement and, by extension, a deeper understanding of the information at hand. Children thrive in environments that encourage learning at their level, and an increase in learning enhancement also leads to an increase in learning focus.



Some NGS students took the opportunity to follow the Head of School and Head of Primary for a day, to discover the joys and challenges of leading a school.

Differentiated learning requires flexibility in teaching techniques that can be adjusted to reach students based on their own learning capabilities. However, it is more about understanding the needs of our students and providing effective options to help create the best possible learning environment. By exploring a diverse set of learning tools and approaches, this technique allows for a high rate of learning success among our students because it breaches any potential barriers by finding the right path for educational growth.

Our academic results continue to be impressive, with our students consistently attaining a high standard.

The Year 3 cohort achieved outstanding results across all domains in 2022, highlighting a strong proficiency in both Literacy and Numeracy:

- 79% of the cohort achieved results in the top two bands in Reading.
- 69% of the cohort achieved results in the top two bands in Numeracy.
- 85% of the cohort achieved results in the top two bands in Writing.

The Year 5 cohort also achieved pleasing results with particular strength in Reading and Numeracy:

- 65% of the cohort achieved results in the top two bands in Reading.
- 56% of the cohort achieved results in the top two bands in Numeracy.
- 47% of the cohort achieved results in the top two bands in Writing.

We appreciate you Mrs Thomas!

Thank you Mrs Thomas for guiding and improving the quality of our Primary Education at Newcastle Grammar School. Your contribution and support have shaped us to be the excellent Primary School we are today. We will forever cherish our memories of your dedication to primary education. You made us your family, and we respect your exceptional leadership.

Farewell and best wishes from the Primary School.

Mrs Alisha Dyer
Head of Primary K-6



THANK YOU ERICA THOMAS

FAREWELL

On behalf of the Board of Newcastle Grammar School, I would like to acknowledge Mrs Erica Thomas for her outstanding contribution to the success of NGS and thank her for leading the School so well over the last eight years.

Despite the unexpected challenges we have all faced since March 2020, the School finds itself continuing to achieve exceptional outcomes for students, implementing its strategic objectives, in a sound financial position, and having a platform for a stable future. The mature leadership of Mrs Thomas has played no small role in this. Her commitment to excellence has seen her expertly balance the provision of quality

education for our students in a harmonious learning environment, with the drive to continually refine and improve the School.

Over the last eight years, our reputation for providing excellence in education has been reflected in continuous enrolment growth. We welcome new families to an NGS community in which Mrs Thomas, with support from an incredible staff, has ensured every student is known, valued and encouraged to be their best self. Such a high quality of student and staff relationships is often only found in smaller schools.

During her time as Head of School, Mrs Thomas has played a key role

in many significant advances.

The redevelopment of Park Campus is a major capital works project with planning encompassing best practice and future-fit spaces. This improvement to the learning environment at our Primary Campus will provide students and staff with new adaptable classrooms and exciting areas for students to grow, discover, explore and flourish — priorities under Mrs Thomas' leadership.

The School has a new uniform, providing students with more choices. The consultation between Mrs Thomas and students, families and the broader School community, including her preparedness to listen to the needs and voices of these



Mrs Thomas has led the advancement of a genuinely holistic educational environment where the values of Respect, Integrity, Service and Excellence are reflected in the characteristics of our graduates.



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groups, meant that NGS adopted a uniform reflecting the changing needs of its students — an excellent result of these collaborative efforts.

Our co-curricular programme has also prospered, with more outstanding opportunities for more students, more often. Coupled with a world-class wellbeing framework, Mrs Thomas has led the advancement of a genuinely holistic educational environment where the values of Respect, Integrity, Service and Excellence are reflected in the characteristics of our graduates. The tradition of academic excellence at NGS has been strengthened, positioning our students well for a successful future in an ever-changing landscape.

Mrs Thomas oversaw the fabulous and successful Centenary celebrations which brought together the School community across many generations. NGS is a beacon in the broader Newcastle community and the traditions of the past were honoured whilst engaging current students and families and cementing the School's place in the ever-growing vibrancy of Newcastle and the Hunter Region.

In 2020, the School and the Board faced numerous challenges. The ensuing two years have tested the resolve and the commitment of

many in our community and indeed our students. The cyber-attack in late 2020 tested our IT team, the Executive staff and our students. Mrs Thomas and her staff should be commended for their management of this situation with wisdom, calmness and professionalism.

Possibly the most difficult time we have all faced, in the education sector, our school community and in our lives, has been the COVID-19 pandemic. During early 2020 the Board met often with Mrs Thomas and the Executive team to formulate a plan to navigate the unknown. This was a time when Mrs Thomas' commitment, energy and resilience shone. The online platforms and teaching models developed by Mrs Thomas and the staff meant that our students continued to receive unrivalled quality tuition. With the support and safety of all staff and students at the centre of decision-making, the standard of education delivered to NGS students was exceptional under incredibly difficult circumstances.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank Mrs Thomas for her time with NGS and wish her all the very best in the next chapter of her career. She leaves the School with a platform for continued growth and success under the guidance of a new Head of School.

As a parent, I hope you will join with me in thanking Mrs Thomas for her eight amazing years with Newcastle Grammar School and that you, like me, proudly say that your family is part of the NGS community which Mrs Thomas has helped build.

Best wishes, Erica.

Ms Catherine Wilkinson
Chair of the Board

1. *Mrs Erica Thomas at the 2018 Centenary celebration.*
2. *Mrs Thomas presented regularly at Chapel services.*
3. *Hard at work in the 'engine room', Mrs Thomas in the Head of School's office.*
4. *The 2023 Student Leaders with Mrs Erica Thomas at her last Induction Service as Head of School.*

EXCELLENT HSC RESULTS

ACADEMIC

The Class of 2022 celebrated with enthusiasm as they received their impressive HSC results across a variety of subjects. Lily Webster achieved the top ATAR for Newcastle Grammar School and the region – with an outstanding rank of 99.90.

Three students attained all-rounder status, meaning they scored at least 90 percent in 10 of their HSC units; Benjamin Dennis 99.25, Amy Lalor 98.40 and Lily Webster – with Ruby Buckeridge joining the ATAR High Achievers with 98.45. Lucy O'Brien topped NSW in Music 1. Congratulations to these students for their outstanding results, as well as all students in the cohort who have worked so hard.

Dux of NGS for 2022 is School Captain, Lily Webster. Lily has been awarded a full scholarship as part of

the St Andrew's Scholars programme that seeks young people with the capacity and commitment to realise their potential to lead their College, University, Nation and World. This scholarship is awarded to three students each year who thrive academically, are engaged in life, and have the potential to make a significant positive contribution to College and, in the future, the wider community. Lily's full scholarship includes residency at St Andrew's College and The University of Sydney where she will study a Bachelor of Medical Science/ Bachelor of Advanced Studies. Lily, you are a most deserved recipient. You have been an outstanding school leader, upholding the RISE values of our School in so many visible ways.

Lucy O'Brien was nominated for the highest honour for HSC Music

Performance students – an ENCORE Award. Lucy has loved singing since she was young and began lessons at the age of seven. Many would have heard her perform during her time at NGS, most recognisably with the Brass RaZoo jazz band and as Glinda in *Wicked*. Lucy was offered early entry to The University of Sydney at the Conservatorium of Music which will begin in 2023. She was also offered a place at the Berklee College of Music in Boston USA, but has declined for now. Lucy would like to thank Director of Studies, Mrs Leanne Lynch for all her support throughout Year 12. Congratulations Lucy.

Caleb Garven has been offered a scholarship to play baseball at Taft College in Taft, California USA. He will commence in August 2023 as part of their pitching squad and will study Criminal Justice. Caleb is grateful for the support he received at NGS



Class of 2022

through the Supporting Athlete Performance (SAP) programme which allowed him to move ahead in his studies enough to visit the USA during his HSC year, to attend College scout opportunities.

Benjamin Dennis was invited to join the Dayell Scholar Stream at The University of Sydney (for students receiving an ATAR of 98+) where he will study a Bachelor of Commerce/Bachelor Advanced Studies.

Ruby Buckeridge, Gigi Martin and Charlotte Rowland have had their artworks selected for the Lake Macquarie First Class Exhibition.

NGS was ranked 53rd in the state by *The Sydney Morning Herald*, making it the top-ranked non-selective school in the Hunter region. This result places NGS as the top regional school in NSW. We are also incredibly proud of the qualities that are not measured in this ranking – individual students

fulfilling their potential across a diverse range of areas throughout the School, including service, culture, co-curricular and leadership.

More than 50 percent of the 2022 cohort received early entry offers from a range of universities across a variety of faculties. Thank you to the staff who have encouraged, nurtured and supported the students through an incredible three years of disruption to achieve these excellent results.

Many NGS students have accepted offers studying Medicine and Healthcare, with Science, Engineering, Business and Finance, Law, Architecture, Arts, Education, Music, IT, Design, Media and Sport also featuring, which is a testament to the staff across all faculties of the School. Our graduates will be studying at a variety of universities throughout NSW, interstate and overseas.

Our students have performed exceptionally well, grown personally

and developed characteristics and maturity that will serve them well for life, with many exceeding their own expectations. The improvement we saw from Year 10 to Year 12 is significant, reflecting the dedication and perseverance of the students to attain their goals through the implementation of effective study techniques and the forging of relationships with teachers and peers.

We aim to develop graduates who are cognisant of a shared humanity through the complementary elements of the Heart, Head and Hand; they understand self and others; they embrace lifelong learning; and they recognise the needs of the community and the wider world, responding with meaningful service and compassion. We believe that the Class of 2022 embodies these aims.

Well done Year 12!

HSC HIGH ACHIEVERS



Ruby Buckeridge



Benjamin Dennis



Caleb Garven



Amy Lalor



Gabrielle Martin



Lucy O'Brien



Charlotte Rowland



Lily Webster

CLASS OF 2022

CELEBRATING

What a privilege it was to welcome parents and guests to the Valedictory Eucharist in Christ Church Cathedral to celebrate the graduating Class of 2022.

The Newcastle Grammar School traditions of flowers for every student, a word of encouragement from the Very Reverend Katherine Bowyer, Dean of Newcastle, incredible music performances led by Mr Kevin Young and the enthusiastic 'clap out' involving parents, friends and students from Hill Campus, marked the end of formal schooling for the Class of 2022. Thank you to all who shared this moment of jubilation – the culmination of years of learning, hours of study, memories made, and character strengths developed. The acknowledgement of a childhood filled, and a day of hope and excitement as futures are pondered and the next stage begins.

"Year 12, as you approach the HSC in the coming weeks and you leave us to embrace different yet equally splendid paths, let your life be filled with joy and optimism and let others see this joy within you. It is such an exciting time in your lives, and I know you will embrace every opportunity and reach for the stars as you take this next step. We look forward to seeing what significant contributions you make to the world."

— Mrs Erica Thomas, Head of School

Congratulations Class of 2022.
We wish you well.

“... let your life be filled with joy and optimism and let others see this joy within you.”



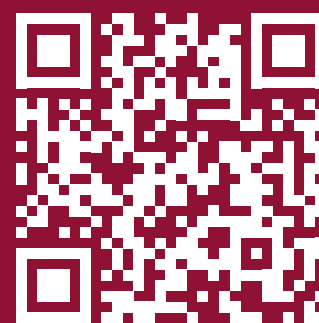
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**Watch the
Valedictory 2022 video
for more highlights.**

1. The 'clap out' is a beloved tradition at NGS.
2. Graduates and guests arriving at Christ Church Cathedral.
3. The Very Reverend Katherine Bowyer, Dean of Newcastle, offering students some words of encouragement.
4. Thank you to the parents and NGS community for their continued support of our graduating students.
5. Senior students share in the excitement of the celebration.
6. Troy Winchester laying the Class of 2022 paver outside Christ Church Cathedral.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2025

FUTURE

The Newcastle Grammar School Strategic Plan for 2023-2025 was launched to the School community in August last year. The Plan was the culmination of many months of hard work across different departments of the School.

Rather than taking a traditional approach to the process, the Board employed international strategic consultants Business Models Inc. Their fresh and contemporary method involved intensive workshops with the Executive and Board, and detailed consultation with staff, students, parents and alumni.

At the end of this exhaustive process, the final document commits the School to an ambitious overall target:

By 2025, Newcastle Grammar School will be recognised as the leading regional school and as a world-class centre for learning and wellbeing.

To achieve this, five priorities were identified:

1. We empower teaching excellence
2. We enable NGS wellbeing
3. We grow good citizens
4. We drive sustainable performance
5. We keep getting better.

The priorities lead to nine initiatives that will be pursued over the next three years. Under the Plan's detailed roadmap, each initiative has been divided into separate phases for design and implementation, to ensure we focus on these two key strategic practises independently.

Since the launch in August, several initiative teams have started their work. The teams consist of staff



Newcastle Grammar School's Strategic Plan 2023-2025 charts an ambitious course to be known as the leading regional school.

members from across the School to achieve a balance of experience and perspective. Every team meets fortnightly, either face-to-face or online, using design-thinking principles to scope their tasks, set objectives and determine key results.

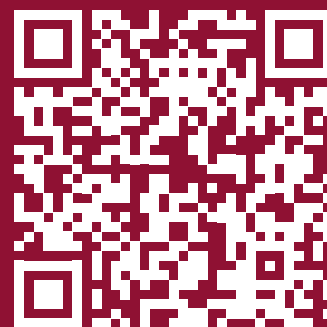
Team 1 is working on setting high performance frameworks for the School, staff and students, which will form the basis for performance management and targeted development in future.

Team 5 is focused on NGS Wellbeing to create a clear alignment across K-12 and to develop existing programmes even further.

Team 8 is tasked with creating a clear and coherent alignment across Primary, Secondary and Tertiary so that NGS students and parents feel prepared and

supported at all three of these key transition points.

In Term 4 last year, more teams started work, focusing on Digital Learning and an NGS Learning Institute. The final teams will be in operation from the start of this year.



**Watch the Strategic Plan
2023-2025 video for
more information.**

THE JOY OF GIVING

PHILANTHROPY

For over 100 years, Newcastle Grammar School has been a beacon of educational excellence in the community. As students enter our doors, they are enriched by a quality educational experience that develops the whole child and prepares them for the complexities of the future.

The School has a history of giving generously to assist families and support students to obtain a life-changing quality education. Now is the time to formalise this process to impact the lives of current and future students – to provide the opportunity for more students to access the transformational tools, resources, programmes and wellbeing support that distinguishes NGS as the leading school in the region.

Newcastle Grammar School was built upon a heritage of giving, with each generation benefiting from the generosity of those who went before. The power of collective community giving can truly create a legacy. The joy of seeing the positive impact your contribution makes

now and for future generations of NGS students is tangible.

We invite you to be a part of the heart of our future.

Plans have commenced to grow the Scholarship Fund and Building Fund, and to develop an Indigenous Scholarship for those who would otherwise be unable to enjoy the opportunity that is an outstanding NGS education.

We need your help.

By giving to Newcastle Grammar School's Philanthropic Funds, you are contributing to a culture of stewardship, to help the School carry out its mission now and into the future.

Together, we are creating a future for every NGS student.

If you would like to contribute to any of the projects mentioned here, please contact the philanthropy team at giving@ngs.nsw.edu.au or the NGS Accounts Department on 02 4929 5811.



1. *Ms Judy Wotton – previous staff member at NGS, former Head of Primary and Registrar.*
2. *Reverend Roy Wotton, whose friendship with World War II soldier, Mr Stewart Murray, has inspired the NGS Indigenous Scholarship.*

INDIGENOUS SCHOLARSHIP

The Murray/Wotton Bursary will be awarded to an Indigenous student who demonstrates a commitment to their academic studies and a commitment to the broader School community.

This bursary is named after Stewart Murray and the Reverend Roy Wotton, who both served in the Australian Army in World War II. Stewart Murray,

a young Indigenous soldier, was a remarkable servant-hearted man. Murray assisted the Reverend Wotton with burial services during the war and then went on to form an Aboriginal tradesmen's company, became Aboriginal Father of the Year in 1969, became a Justice of the Peace and was honoured with an Order of Australia Medal (OAM). The friendship between the

men lasted well after the war and became a legacy of connection between their families. This bursary was first proposed by the Reverend Roy Wotton's daughter, Judith, in memory of this special friendship and in the hope that this living memorial reminds us of the need for connection and the 'building of bridges' with First Nations peoples.



FESTIVALS OF LEARNING

PRIMARY

At Newcastle Grammar School Primary, we have been enjoying and benefiting greatly from 'Festivals of Learning'. These are a great way for students to involve their parents in their learning journey and demonstrate the skills and knowledge they have gained so far in their 'Inquiry Learning' experience. It has been fabulous to see students, parents and teachers coming together again on campus, for these terrific workshops.

Inquiry Learning is a framework and movement led by Melbourne-based, highly respected educator and impresario, Kath Murdoch. Festivals of Learning are essentially student driven – designed to help Primary children improve their abilities as self-managers, collaborators, communicators, thinkers and researchers (the five Learner Assets). Students are encouraged to share information, to show more independence and to take responsibility for their learning. They are asked to explore multiple perspectives and to reflect on the learning process.

Festivals of Learning strengthen the partnership between students, teachers and parents.

In Primary, we are not only trying to teach students content, we are also trying to teach them these learner assets along the way. Through the Festival of Learning process we are able to see these in action from the students. We explicitly teach the students these skills and how to use them wisely – life skills which they are going to need beyond their schooling.

Parents have been attending workshops at the School and in this way they become part of the learning. They get to see firsthand things their children have been working on; the students get to share it with them and it's really a great way to wrap up inquiry units.

NGS has had a partnership with Kath Murdoch for a number of years. She is well respected in Australia when it comes to Inquiry Learning. At NGS Primary we take a balanced approach. In terms of our English and Maths we use direct, explicit instruction; we have programmes



that are research and evidence based. We use the Inquiry Learning framework for our social science subjects: History, Geography and Science.

We look forward to continuing this showcase opportunity.

1. Year 1 students showing their work to parents.
2. Year 6 students Elliana Sidorovski, Maddie Wilsmore, Imogen Mejia and Neesha Rao displaying some of their stunning work as part of the Festival of Learning.
3. Year 2 students Thomas Boyn (left) and Simon Grove with Simon's parents.

ONE STEP AHEAD: CURRICULUM REFORM

New South Wales is currently undergoing significant curriculum reform for Kindergarten to Year 2, in the areas of English and Mathematics.

When schools moved to the National Curriculum in 2020, NSW wanted to include additional material. Since then, our State curriculum has been based on the National Curriculum, but with more information included. However, a recent review found that the NSW curriculum was too content heavy, had unrealistic expectations, was putting too much demand on teachers and wasn't satisfactorily evidence and research based. The resulting reforms will be implemented across the state in Years K-2, from 2023.

Over the last 20 years, studies into how children best learn to read have been conducted in Australia,

the United Kingdom and the United States. All three studies came up with similar findings, but their recommendations were generally not adopted, for various reasons. Louder voices advocated for the 'balanced literacy' approach, and so this has been widely followed. Smaller voices maintained that this was not the ideal method for teaching reading, and it seems as though we have finally been heard.

The new syllabus for reading in these younger year groups is based upon what is known as the 'Science of Reading'. For us at Newcastle Grammar School, this has been amazing, because we began the Science of Reading technique seven years ago. We were ahead of the pack.

Head of Learning Enhancement K-6, Mrs Tucker, looked into this closely eight years ago. She found that

one of the main problems was that far too many young children were being sent to learning support – sometimes up to 30 and 40 percent. This didn't make sense. Only a very small percentage should need this additional instruction. Our main concern was the lack of a *systematic* and explicit approach to teaching reading.

Trailblazing Mrs Tucker learnt all about the Science of Reading and we started tailoring our teaching programs accordingly. In the following years we saw the reading results flourish. So the new syllabus is following the Science of Reading, and other schools are at the point now where they are embracing something that we have been doing for a long time.

We should celebrate that we have been one step ahead in this area.

Reforms have also been made to Mathematics to ensure it is evidence-based and that we are explicitly teaching maths concepts to children. The teaching of Mathematics has very much gone back to basics, following the Science of Learning. We use evidence-based strategies such as *space practice* and *retrieval practice*, and these are proving to be very effective. We have two teams working on K-2 English and Mathematics, and we have been well supported by the Board, in terms of timings and planning. In 2023 we will have the draft document for reform for Years 3-6 in English and Mathematics.



Kindergarten students Poppy Frisken and Tristan Barrett reading with Miss Jade Biddleston.

DIVING INTO DEEP LEARNING

SECONDARY

In 2022, Newcastle Grammar School was successful in its application to become a Deep Learning Network School. We are now part of a global community of schools working together to implement the world-class pedagogical approach, Deep Learning.

We know that students learn best when they are engaged in the study of concepts that matter; when they are challenged to be creative and critical in an environment that develops core competencies that extend beyond the classroom, providing them with the skillset to take their place in an ever-evolving world and craft their own outstanding futures.

Deep Learning, developed by the preeminent educator, Professor Michael Fullan, emphasises the development of the Deep Learning Competencies: Character, Citizenship, Collaboration, Communication, Creativity and Critical Thinking through a process of backward design that incorporates the four key elements of learning partnerships, learning environments, leveraging digital and effective pedagogical practices. By focusing on the explicit teaching of these competencies, partner schools have shown improvement in student engagement and outcomes.

In 2022, our Heads of Department participated in an action learning experience in which they have become familiar with the Deep Learning approach, using the learning design process to develop and implement learning experiences within their faculties.

Over the course of the semester, we saw a range of deep learning experiences introduced into the classroom, including:

STEM – Engagement with learning partners such as the STEM Innovation Project and Tech Girls to provide students with opportunities to engage with real-world scenarios and experts. The integration of collaboration and communication as explicit competencies were taught in our Term 3 STEM Day.

Languages and Literacy – Year 11 English students participated in the Heywire writing competition, providing them with a broader audience to share their work with. The Year 8 *Romeo and Juliet* unit was also revised to incorporate

the competency of critical thinking more explicitly into the teaching and learning sequence and assessment task. This proved effective as students demonstrated their ability to evaluate the role of their chosen character within the play.

PDHPE – Choosing to focus on the competencies of collaboration and cooperation, PDHPE staff implemented a process of reflective practice within their Dance unit. Students unpacked the elements of collaboration and cooperation and used these to evaluate their skills in these domains. The capacity for metacognition is a key aspect of student achievement, so this will stand them in good stead going forward as they develop the strength of teamwork.



Collaboration is just one of the six Deep Learning Competencies being embraced at NGS. Pictured: Alfie Fegebank, Hannah Choi, Connor Johansen, Mr Simon Halpin and Olivia Johnson.

Global Studies – The Global Studies team has worked hard to introduce a range of partners within subjects to enrich the learning experience of students. Guest speakers from Hunter Water, Greater Bank and The Man Shake brought learning to life. Year 7 students participated in the Hunter Water Challenge designing innovative systems to reduce water usage in the school.

CAPA – Our CAPA team is looking at ways to engage students with learning partners, including resident composers and artists to develop their understanding of the place of Music and Art in the real world. They are also developing ways to leverage digital resources to enhance the learning experience, whilst also building the competency of students in Stage 4 in collaboration.

In 2023, NGS will continue to implement this approach across the Secondary School, with teachers engaging in further professional learning to build their capacity to design experiences that enhance the learning experience for all students.

THE RICHNESS OF MULTICULTURALISM

EAL/D



Do you know someone who speaks another language? The common answer these days is 'yes'.

Recent Census data shows that roughly a quarter of the Australian population speaks a language other than English in the home, and just over half the population can be classified as either first or second-generation migrants. The trend of increased diversity of cultures can also be seen and celebrated in our own school community, representing 37 different languages from across

Africa, Asia and Europe. This diversity brings a richness and knowledge of the world to our students' everyday lives.

The acronym EAL/D refers to English as an Additional Language or Dialect. The EAL/D programme at Newcastle Grammar School began in the second semester of 2019 when we saw increased enrolments of students who were in the process of learning and acquiring English. The programme provides additional support for our multi-lingual learners to reach their full potential through successful acquisition of English. This includes mastery of academic as well as social English, thus enabling students to make friends and participate in classroom activities. Additional language acquisition is a journey that takes time, experience, and assistance.

Newcastle Grammar School offers a range of processes and procedures to ensure students receive the necessary support to thrive. Our language learners from Kindergarten through to Year 12 are supported by highly qualified and knowledgeable staff. Students receive ongoing language assistance matched specifically to their level of language acquisition and attainment. The programme utilises several modes of delivery and is highly individualised and tailored to maximise student learning to ensure educational success.

We are very proud of the diversity of our students and the opportunities we have to enrich their education.

Mrs Juliette Ra

English as an Additional Language / Dialect Teacher (K-12)



Additional language acquisition is a journey that takes time, experience, and assistance.

CHRISTMAS IN JULY

MUSICAL

“Just sing a Christmas song, it’s like magic if things go wrong. Just spread some Christmas cheer by singing loud for all to hear.” In these unprecedented times, it’s these words of Buddy Elf, the lead character in our musical, that remind us of the importance of finding joy in the simple things, and *Elf Jr* certainly delivered much joy for students, staff and the audience alike.

At the beginning of Term 3 last year, we witnessed the culmination of hard work from students in Years 4 to 9 as the musical *Elf Jr* finally made it to the stage. Throughout this process, our students experienced the auditions, rehearsal phase and production week where the show finally came together. Rehearsals were held every Monday afternoon in Terms 1 and 2 when the performers learnt all the songs, dialogue, character movements and dances.

While some students were still on holidays, the *Elf Jr* team returned to School for the production week which involved students and staff working together to get the show ready for the audience. It was wonderful for the cast and crew to see how the props, sets, backdrops, lighting, sound and costumes all contribute to the show.

Our students were so excited to perform on stage and to experience the buzz and energy backstage during the show. The four performances held over three nights had many memorable moments, from Santa’s workshop full of elves and Fake Santa cameo appearances, to beautiful singing and dancing in the snow. The audience loved the show and it was hard to believe the process had to end. That’s the bittersweetness of theatre — such beauty in the moment, but it’s all gone in the blink of an eye.

Being involved in a production like this highlights the benefits of the creative arts in our children’s lives. Not only did this show spread the Christmas cheer at a time we all needed it, but it gave the students everlasting friendships and memories to cherish. Thank you to all the staff and parents involved — without your help the show would not have happened. And finally, congratulations to our *Elf Jr* students, we are so proud of your effort and success with the show. Bravo!

“Our students were so excited to perform on stage and to experience the buzz and energy backstage during the show.”







ENRICHMENT SUCCESS

ACADEMIC

Newcastle Grammar School extended its Enrichment Programme from Primary School into Year 7 for the first time in 2022. A major element of this programme is student involvement in competitions aimed at gifted and high potential learners.

da Vinci Decathlon

Our youngest da Vinci Decathlon participants represented NGS proudly in the academic decathlon competition. Working in teams, students completed challenges from different disciplines including Cartography, Science and Legacy and our teams achieved the following places:

- Year 5 team: third overall in Year 5, second for Creative Producers, Cartography, Ideation and Legacy, and third for Art and Poetry.
- Year 6 team: second overall in Year 6, first in Code Breaking and Mathematics, second for Legacy and third for Engineering.

Thank you to Ms Kristen Williams who coached the students.

Future Problem Solving (FPS) Scenario Writing (Year 6)

The Scenario Writing category is an international programme which is aimed at gifted writers. Over three terms, students research a topic and create a futuristic short story that

uses future trends predicted from research. This challenge requires students to think critically and creatively about real topics affecting the world and to use this information as inspiration for a creative solution in a piece that has strict guidelines.

We are extremely proud of all NGS students who were involved in this competition. They were highly motivated and engaged in the learning process and produced writing of a very high standard.

Congratulations to our Year 6 entrants: Isaac Beattie, Tyler Byrom, Poppy Kinnane, Oliver Lewis, Leila Morris-Bloom, Elise McSkimming and Zach Porter.

A special congratulations to Tyler and Poppy, who were invited to compete in the FPS National Finals in Melbourne in October. This was an outstanding achievement, as there were only 12 students chosen to participate nationally in this division. Poppy received Best Writer and was a gold medal recipient at the National Final in her division. In the overall Australian division, Poppy placed fifth and Tyler placed fourth in the Junior Division.

Future Problem Solving Scenario Writing (Year 7)

The first Year 7 Scenario Writing opportunity was held as part of



the myNGS Passport programme from Terms 1 to 3 in 2022. The School had 13 Year 7 writers participate in the Middle Division (Years 7 to 9) — Jessica Choi, Charlie Cohen, Matilda Dyer, Jade Goldsworthy, Kanisha Goyal, Kayela Habermiedl, Lucas Hu, Vrushali Karanam, Sonny Nalluri, Charlotte Paterson-Clark, Evie Riddell, Ava Spencer and Joshua Sverdllov.

Our Year 7 FPS students received extremely high marks, but a special congratulations to Jessica and Matilda who were also invited to participate in the National Final in Melbourne. In the Middle Division, only 20 students from Years 7 to 9 across Australia were invited to attend and Matilda placed a very impressive sixth.

Ethics Olympiad (Years 5 to 7)

Our 'Ethletes' in Years 5 and 6 participated in the Ethics Olympiad

1. *The Year 7 Tournament of Minds Team achieved Honours in their division; L-R back: Matilda Dyer, Scarlett Van Dyck, Sandili Phaltane L-R front: Daniel Hayes, Jessica Choi, Vrushali Karanam, Evie Riddell.*
2. *Congratulations to Malachite Wills, winner of the NSW State Division for Year 4 in the 2022 National History Challenge.*

in Term 3. Working in groups, they discussed ethical case studies with opposing teams from around Australia, New Zealand and Hong Kong. Their ethical discussions were guided and judged by ethics and philosophy academics from Australia and the United States via Zoom.

Our Year 6 team, comprising Brooke Baker, Tyler Byrom, Thomas Moir and Zach Porter, placed fourth overall and our Year 5 team of Thomas Hillard, Sofiya Kidanov, Brooklyn Knauer and Isabelle Waerea placed seventh overall.

NGS also had two Year 7 teams competing for the first time in the Middle Division of the Ethics Olympiad in November. Team Pink placed seventh, while students from Team Red came eighth and

received an honourable mention for their strong ethical arguments. These were outstanding results considering the teams were competing against many older and more experienced students.

Tournament of Minds (Year 7)

Tournament of Minds is a creative programme that incorporates critical thinking, creative solutions to problems and dramatic performance. Our Year 7 team participated in the Language Literature challenge, where they told the story of how three different antagonists from literature were misrepresented in their texts. Congratulations to the NGS team: Jessica Choi, Matilda Dyer, Daniel Hayes, Vrushali Karanam, Sandili Phaltane, Evie Riddell and Scarlett Van Dyck who achieved Honours in their division.

National History Challenge

The theme for 2022 in the National History Challenge was 'Causes and Consequences'. Congratulations to our Year 5 and 6 entrants, Makenzie Avery, Tyler Byrom and Thomas Hillard, who submitted essays on a historical topic of their choosing.

A special congratulations to Malachite Wills, who won the NSW State Division for Year 4. Malachite created a working board game that linked to the theme through his historical topic of the Black Death.

We look forward to further expansion and new opportunities in the NGS Enrichment Programme.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP WINNER



The outstanding talents of Year 7 student, Myla Tucker, were recognised recently when she received an Edstart Achievement Award following the successful launch late in 2021 of her swimwear brand, Cinnamon Cove.

Myla described Cinnamon Cove as swimwear designed by tweens, for tweens. "I wanted to create stylish yet practical age-appropriate swimwear that supports active lifestyles, a love of fashion and respect for our planet," she said.

The Edstart Achievement Awards Program recognises students for their contributions and ambitions across six categories: Technology and Innovation, Entrepreneurship,

Sustainability and Environment, Social Impact, Sport and Physical Wellbeing and Performing and Visual Arts.

Myla received the 2022 Entrepreneurship Award out of hundreds of nominations from across Australia. Each winner also received a \$1,500 grant to fund a project, initiative or training related to their category.

Congratulations, Myla! We wish you every success in your future endeavours.

Visit cinnamoncove.com.au for more information about Myla's product.

GIFTED AND TALENTED CAMP

EXPERIENCES

Newcastle Grammar School students were among a cohort of 132 from 17 schools across NSW who took part in the 2022 Gifted and Talented Camp in Southwest Sydney. Participants enjoyed the unique opportunity to express themselves through words, music, mathematics or creative arts.

After two years without a camp due to the pandemic, NGS stepped into the role of camp coordinator.

A new venue to accommodate the very large cohort had to be found just a few months prior to the event, following the sale of the original location. Head of Learning and Teaching K-6, Mrs Amy Falconer, led the School's coordination efforts.

"It was fabulous to see so many schools returning or coming along to their first G and T Camp," she said. "This was not only a fantastic opportunity for students to work with like-minded peers, but also

a wonderful week of collegial conversations with other educators in the Gifted and Talented space."

Students collaborated, shared ideas and experienced a range of challenging and rigorous learning activities through masterclasses and seminars to deepen and extend learning beyond the regular curriculum. These included Cryptology, Visual Art, Escape Room, Robotics, Coding, Architectural Geometry, Stop Motion Animation, Shakespeare, Entrepreneurship, Storytelling and Poetry. Seminars were elective courses intended to engage students in areas of passion and interest. They provided enriching experiences through intensive, deep learning sessions. Participants had six seminars to choose from: Race to Create a Racetrack, Writing, Google Doodles, Landscape Drawing, HMS Lusitania and 20 years of Living in Space.

Students also enjoyed a variety of outdoor activities as well as an engaging and fun evening programme which included a guest speaker from Austria (via Zoom), trivia, a challenge night and a disco to end the week.

A huge thank you to the NGS team and Heads of Independent Co-educational Schools (HICES) Executive Assistant, Ms Caroline O'Brien, for a very successful camp. We are already looking forward to the next one!

*Head of Learning and Teaching K-6,
Mrs Amy Falconer with students at the
2022 Gifted and Talented Camp.*



Students collaborated, shared ideas and experienced a range of challenging and rigorous learning activities ...





SPRING IN THE SOUL

EXPERIENCES

The Class of 2023 cohort was introduced to a strengths-based mindset during their Year 11 Conference in September.

A range of engaging sessions based around our Visible Wellbeing SEARCH (Strengths, Emotional Management, Attention and Awareness, Relationships, Coping, Habits and Goals) Framework, were enjoyed by students and presenters alike. These included keynote speakers, workshops, reflections, gratitude letters, careers information, goal setting, leadership conversations and an inter-House creative and physical challenge.

The intention was for students to gain a deep appreciation of the importance of harnessing their strengths on the journey through Year 12 and beyond. Some days might require bravery, self-regulation and perseverance, others kindness, humility and hope or perhaps creativity, curiosity and teamwork.



The keynote speakers all shared their authentic and personal stories of strength and struggle and encouraged students to be excited about the non-linear nature of the path that lies ahead.

Thank you to the following guest speakers, including Newcastle Grammar School alumni:

Professor Laura-Anne Bull
Pro Vice Chancellor Students Experience and Academic Registrar at University of Newcastle.

Mr Jonathan Hiley (Class of 2009)
Creative Development Partner at Google.

Dr Natalie Holmes
Senior Research Fellow at the Australian Centre for Microscopy and Microanalysis at The University of Sydney.

Mr Ryan MacPherson
CEO at Coassemble.

Ms Sam Poolman
Elite athlete, business owner, commentator, coach.

Dr James Staciwa
Chiropractor and business owner.

Ms Charlotte Thomas (Class of 2017)
Medical student.

Mr Todd Williams
Advisor/Director and NGS Board member.

Ms Bella Williams (Class of 2021)
Nursing undergraduate, surf life saver, athlete.

Professor Julie Connell
Professor, Executive MBA Director, NBS Sydney Director University of Newcastle.

Ms Kelli Hardy
Chartered Professional Engineer, Aurecon.

Mr Lachlan Wilson (Class of 1988)
Partner Hicksons Lawyers.

Dr Sean Farrelin (Class of 1995)
Data Science Consultant, Technology Advisor, Author.

This was an exciting, engaging and professional two days for our students as they moved into their final year of school.

QUEENSLAND EARTHSHOT TOUR

EXPERIENCES

The Earthshot Prize has been designed to find and grow solutions that will repair our planet this decade. Newcastle Grammar School's Earthshot Tour was developed to encourage students to foster big ideas to help make a difference in our world. The tour was arranged to encourage students who are keen to solve environmental challenges and inspire them to develop a lifelong awareness of their individual and collective impact on the environment.

"It was an early September morning, and like 30 other students from Years 10 and 11, I was out of bed just before 4.00am, eager and excited to spend two weeks in Far North Queensland. Upon arrival, we spent most of the first day acclimating to the humid weather with a quick lunch at Townsville's waterfront precinct, The Strand. We then experienced a perfect introduction to Queensland's astonishing beauty at Castle Hill Lookout.

The following days were filled with activities, from an aquaculture workshop and tour of the James Cook University (JCU) marine biology department, to sustainability seminars from 'Plastic Free Townsville' and the City Council's Sustainability Team. We were introduced to some of the region's most innovative and impactful sustainability initiatives and learnt how to take practical steps to reduce our plastic use. At the end of each day, we also had opportunities to connect and socialise as a group at dinner or in the pool.

It was a quick boat ride to Orpheus Island, our second destination, where we were welcomed by the JCU team and headed straight to our first snorkel of the trip. Orpheus Island offers a protected marine environment with the opportunity to see a wide array of corals and fish. It was great experience to be able to use what we had learnt in two lectures to identify species on the reef, such as tabular and branching coral, angelfish, and anemonefish. On our second day, we split into groups and took the boats to two different locations – a sheltered beach with a jetty and a second reef. We were lucky enough to see a turtle and sharks from the boat!

After gaining valuable knowledge about the Great Barrier Reef's marine ecosystem, then stopping off in Cairns, we spent a full day aboard the Dreamtime vessel. We had a bumpy ride to the reefs, but it was worth it, as we applied our new skills to help monitor species and had the privilege of experiencing indigenous culture presentations.

Following days in the water, we experienced a change in scenery when we travelled to JCU's Daintree Rainforest Observatory. The Daintree Rainforest is home to thousands of unique species, which we were confronted by at our camp and on our spotlighting tour, including rare frog species, numerous snakes and



even a native Giant White-Tailed Rat. A highlight for many was the 47 metre Canopy Crane which provided the perfect way to view a world heritage habitat from a different perspective, enabling students to see the biodiversity of the rainforest up close.

We ended the trip back in Cairns with an inspirational workshop by the Australian Youth Climate Coalition, enjoyed free time to stroll along Cairns' foreshore and a final night celebration dinner. Everyone gained extensive experience and new knowledge from a biological, sustainability and educational perspective, and learnt to simply appreciate the overwhelming beauty of the natural world. As a result of the hard work and organisation from the teachers, the Earthshot Tour was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and unlocked the potential of a new cohort of inventors, innovators and leaders." – Hannah Choi, Year 11



1. A perfect introduction to Queensland's astonishing beauty at Castle Hill Lookout.
2. Earthshot Tour participants enjoyed exploring Orpheus Island by boat.
3. One of the researchers showed us how she captures and studies the sting rays.
4. Students explored many species above and below water.
5. Enjoying the campfire at the end of a busy day on Tour.
6. Students listening to the briefing at Daintree.
7. Earthshot Tour participants in front of the stunning backdrop of Cape Tribulation.



Everyone gained extensive experience and new knowledge from a biological, sustainability and educational perspective ...



PASSING OUT PARADE

SERVICE

Congratulations to our 2022 Year 12 cadets who completed their final ceremonial act as they graduated from the Service and Adventure Training Unit (SATU). Thank you to Major Lee Beaman for all his work with our cadets, culminating in their official Passing Out Parade in September.

It was terrific to welcome back former NGS Director of Operations and Cadet Liaison Officer, Mr Duncan McKensey (NGS Class of 1994), for the parade. Mr McKensey fostered a commitment to the ideals of the Unit over many years at Newcastle Grammar School. He spoke of the role

Service, Adventure and Training play in our lives and the future benefits the students gained from having been part of the experience.

Commander of the NSW 2nd Australian Army Cadet Brigade Colonel Glenn Taylor was also present and recognised that SATU had represented the School with pride for 40 years and given countless students an opportunity to serve the School and local community with distinction.

We thank the students, teachers and service personnel who played a part in the success of this programme.

Several SATU graduates have gone on to serve proudly with the Australian Defence Force (ADF), including two who are currently attending the ADF Academy.

A genuine congratulations to all our cadets on a successful parade in difficult weather! May you continue to develop and nurture the many skills you have learnt being a part of the SATU at NGS.

Graduating Year 12 cadets – Nicholas De Grauw, Josephine Armstrong, Cameron Carson and Joseph Bright.

AN OUTBURST OF THE SOUL

MUSIC

The Music Department was incredibly busy during Semester 2 last year. Between classes, individual instrumental lessons, choir, band and orchestra rehearsals, students were prepared and excited for assessments and opportunities to showcase their talent and hard work.

From Kindergarten to Year 12, the students' growth, proficiency and improvement was evidenced by the standard of musicianship shown at the end of the year performances. The strains of music and song could be heard across our campuses, and we thank the staff who contributed to the enjoyment and learning of every student in their charge. So, whether a beginner, or a well-practised star-in-the-making, music is alive and well at Newcastle Grammar School.



As composer Frederick Delius said, "Music is an outburst of the soul." We hope you enjoyed experiencing some of these 'outbursts' as much as the students enjoyed playing for you at assemblies, awards ceremonies, Carols and Chapel

services, Founders' Day, HSC music recital, The Magical Christmas Jigsaw, mini concerts, Passing Out Parade, Remembrance Day, Speech Day, Year 12 Graduation, year level celebrations and more.



SECONDARY SPORT SUCCESS

SPORT

Newcastle Grammar School students' commitment, dedication and enthusiasm, coupled with a sporting culture where our RISE values are consistently in action, saw NGS achieve historic sporting results in 2022.

Swimming, Athletics and Cross Country Trifecta

For the first time in 25 years, NGS won all three Hunter Region Independent Schools (HRIS) Division 1 Championships in Swimming, Athletics and Cross Country.

Our swimmers also went on to win the Association of Independent Co-Educational Schools

(AICES) Secondary Swimming Championships for the third straight year, and we reported the highest number of students progressing through the School Sport Australia pathway.

Our Cross Country team was equally successful, with NGS not only winning the HRIS Cross Country Championships in convincing fashion, but we also saw the highest number of students representing HRIS at the AICES Secondary Cross Country Championships as well as our highest number of students representing at the NSW All Schools level.

The opportunity for our Athletics team to compete and progress to higher

levels saw students contribute with an increased sense of joy and school spirit. This enthusiasm resulted in one of our most successful athletics seasons in recent history, with long-standing records shattered by a new crop of Track and Field athletes progressing through to NSW Combined Independent Schools (NSWCIS) Championship level in numbers not seen before.

HRIS Representatives and HRIS Gala Days

It was also a successful year for HRIS Representative selection, with a record number of 120 students chosen to represent HRIS squads and teams across a variety of sports, including Basketball, Hockey, Netball and Rugby Union.



2023 was an historic year for sport at NGS: For the first time in 25 years, NGS won all three Hunter Region Independent Schools (HRIS) Division 1 Championships in Athletics, Cross Country and Swimming. Pictured left to right: Luka Karihaloo, Patrick Stanley and Alice Jeffery.

The Gala Day teams were the epitome of our RISE values in action, with students taking great pride in representing NGS in a variety of sports, including Basketball, Football, Netball, Tennis and Touch Football. Our collective values and culture of contribution led to some outstanding results, including:

- HRIS Champions – 15 Girls Basketball
- HRIS Champions – 15 Girls Netball
- Runners-Up – 16 Girls Netball
- AICES Champions – 15 Girls Netball

Congratulations to all students who contributed to our NGS sporting teams in 2022. A sincere thanks also to all parents, grandparents and carers who contributed to our success by supporting the students throughout the year and lending assistance to our various teams and events.

Community Sports and Outdoor Adventure

Many students enjoyed opportunities in the Community Sport and Outdoor Adventure space. Students showed great enthusiasm in representing NGS in new areas such as Surfing and Mountain Biking, and our Snowsports specialists enjoyed an incredibly successful season, winning several national medals.

The Netball and Rowing programmes went from strength to

strength in 2022, boasting record numbers of participants, and it has been a joy to see so many students representing NGS and building strong connections and friendships along the way. We are also grateful for the collegiality and enthusiasm with which our Netball and Rowing families support these programmes and contribute to their success.

The return to Terms 3 and 4 Community Sport offerings saw students flock back to sports such as Touch Football, Basketball

and T20 Cricket, making Term 4 one of the busiest periods for our community teams. It was extremely fulfilling to see students contribute to these sports with such joy, team spirit and enthusiasm.

The NGS Sports Staff would like to thank all our students and families for their ongoing support, commitment to training and involvement in NGS Sport.

LUKE'S METEORIC RISE IN POWERLIFTING



Year 11 student Luke Talley has achieved world ranking in his first year of Powerlifting.

Less than a year since he first discovered the sport, Luke Talley represented Team Australia at the Commonwealth Championships in Auckland, finishing with an astonishing gold medal sweep across all three categories of Squat, Bench Press and Deadlift. He now holds the Commonwealth Powerlifting record in the Squat (170kg), Bench Press (96.5kg) and total record (391.5kg).

Luke said that like many people, he started out lifting weights casually before discovering Powerlifting. "It was a sport with an easy pathway to follow, and it was at the forefront of sports that embrace diversity because it is divided up by weight and age classes," he said.

Through the School's Supporting Athlete Performance (SAP) programme, and further help from Head of Athletic Performance, Ms Leah Gilbert, Luke was able to find a local Powerlifting gym and coach. His first competition was in March 2021, where he qualified for the NSW State Championships in April. Luke's results made him first in the world for the 13-15 years <53kg class by squat, first in Australia and 16th in the world for his total (combined best squat, bench and deadlift).

Luke went on to compete at the National Championships in September, placing third in the world by squat for the Under 18s, and top

25 in the same class by total. His subsequent record-breaking results in the Commonwealth Championships placed him top 20 in the world by total.

"During this chaotic Powerlifting season around exams and assessments, [Head of Athlete Development, Ms Sam Poolman] has been so supportive with helping me plan my training around schoolwork and giving me valuable advice with how to plan my daily routine," he said.

Congratulations Luke on such a successful start to what will no doubt be an outstanding future!



... it was at the forefront of sports that embrace diversity ...



SUPPORTING ATHLETE PERFORMANCE

SPORT

Led by well-known former professional netball player, coach, businesswoman and commentator, Ms Sam Poolman, the Supporting Athlete Performance (SAP) programme at Newcastle Grammar School is rising to a new level of professionalism in 2023.

Student athletes benefit from quality resources including adjusted timetables allowing for the increased level of training; workshops and individual physiotherapy consults; performance, mindset and recovery support; strength and conditioning programming and mentoring; nutrition workshops and individual support; academic support from the Director of Learning and Teaching, including elective and time management support; wellbeing support by affiliates, Heads of

House and school psychologist; and individual mentoring with the Head of Athlete Development.

A specialised tracking system, ATHLETE 360, provides data to better support students holistically. It targets areas that focus on student wellbeing, assisting with monitoring their performance and upskilling for the future.

The programme, combined with this comprehensive tracking system, provides the foundational springboard to help students become world's best.

NGS is proud to bring this exceptional programme to the School, helping the next generation of elite sportspeople become not only great athletes but also excellent people.

The SAP programme is for selected students in Secondary, who meet the NGS Sporting Framework that has been designed to align with the Australian Institute of Sport FTEM (Foundations, Talent, Elite, Mastery) pathways framework.

SAP was founded in 2020 to help support athletes academically whilst they achieve athletically. Since its foundation, our athletes have continued to grow, develop and raise the bar with their achievements.

This incredible new programme, the only one of its kind in the region, is the next step in providing quality resources to give unparalleled opportunities for outstanding futures of our high-performing athletes.





... helping the next generation of elite sportspeople become not only great athletes but also excellent people.



2023 SAP LAUNCH

The launch event was held in the Hill Building Common Room, with local media present. Recent graduates, Caleb Garven, Asha Turner-Funk and Gabriel Jeffery were interviewed by local media, including TV and print. Part of the programme includes media training and they all represented NGS with professionalism.

Congratulations to all involved in making this launch event such a success. We look forward to seeing the next generation of talent reach incredible heights in their sport, academics and character with the support of the NGS SAP programme.

A PHILOSOPHY OF RESPECT

STAFF



For Year 4 Teacher, Mrs Natalie Van Dyck, teaching at Newcastle Grammar School is all about kind and respectful engagement with every student.

What appealed to you about teaching and when did you start?

Time certainly flies when you're enjoying your job! My first days of teaching were in the late 1990s. I have a deep love for learning. Nothing makes me happier and more satisfied than seeing the progress of my students. I have had so many ideas about what I would like to teach, what I'd like to implement, how to help children love education and what I could do better to have students reach excellent

outcomes and thrive socially and emotionally. I like the quote, "How we live our days is how we live our lives." I want my classroom to be a happy, successful and purposeful place.

You have taught several different year levels at NGS. How long have you been a teacher here?

I have worked in a variety of schools that have all been very different. NGS is my favourite because there's such a sense of belonging here, with the families, students and staff. I think I came here over 16 years ago as a substitute teacher when Mrs Judy Wotton was Head of Park Campus. I have seen many educational and physical changes at the School and I'm thrilled to see the transition into our future with the new building infrastructure.

How did you know NGS was the right place for you?

It was my first day at NGS, and one of the first things I noticed was a Kindergarten girl who was distressed and crying, and the Head, Ms Wotton, took her by the hand and quietly walked her to class with her friends. She stayed with the little

girl for a long time, until she had become calm and begun to smile. It was that attitude of treating every child with respect — as an individual, fellow human being, not just another student. That is very much how I feel about teaching, and that moment really made me realise this is where I want to be.

What do you love about your current role at NGS?

I love being part of an innovative, dynamic school and a purpose-driven team. NGS is a place of high expectations. It supports all students to achieve their level of excellence in a broad range of subjects and have a good sense of personal wellbeing. Being surrounded by experts in their fields is inspirational. This expertise ensures students are using their time efficiently, leading to success. I love the students! It thrills me to see students be confident to show their unique personalities. I love seeing them be proud of their learning, and just being the best versions of themselves. They're all so different, which is wonderful!

Can you tell us a bit more about coming back to Park Campus after spending some time away?

I was lucky enough to teach overseas, in Singapore, and I also participated in a teacher exchange in Ontario, Canada. I discovered so much about that part of the world and the Canadian education system. I truly believe we need to nurture the next generation to be global citizens. Returning to NGS was such a wonderful homecoming. Everyone was so kind, and I just thought: what a terrific school, it's great to be back!



CLOSE-KNIT COMMUNITY

APPEALS

STAFF



Mr Benjamin Peacock joined Newcastle Grammar School as a STEM teacher at the beginning of 2022. He brings a wealth of experience having taught Mathematics from Year 7 to 12 across all ability ranges in independent schools for the past 11 years, most recently also working in student wellbeing, leadership and mentoring.

Mr Peacock moved with his wife and three children aged eight, six and four to Newcastle in 2017. "I am delighted to have joined the NGS community," he said. "One of the things I have valued the most since moving to Newcastle is the close-knit community. I have felt welcomed and a part of the team from day one. I am thankful to work with highly qualified, experienced, and enthusiastic professionals. One of the things that struck me most is the quality of the teaching professionals in the STEM faculty and the broader NGS faculty." Mr Peacock said he had also found the students at NGS to be genuine, diligent and friendly.

A passionate teacher in the classroom, Mr Peacock is equally enthusiastic about forming positive relationships with students and their



families. He has held leadership positions as a Head of Year Group and Assistant Head of Faculty, in whole school operations as well as overseeing whole school wellbeing data. These positions have given Mr Peacock invaluable insight into the inner workings of a school and continue to motivate him to grow in his career. This year, he is commencing a Masters degree in Educational Leadership and Management through the University of Newcastle.

Mr Peacock is an EDROLO specialist. EDROLO resources are used at Newcastle Grammar School and at 1,000 schools nationally, for teaching Mathematics and Science.

"In 2017, with the implementation of the new Stage 6 Syllabus, I had a sliding doors moment when

online teaching and learning provider EDROLO ran a professional development session at the school in which I was working," he said. "They were looking for presenters, and after a rigorous interview process, I began working with them in making resources for Mathematics Advanced and Mathematics Standard, which I have continued to do both for the NSW and Queensland Senior courses."

Mr Peacock is a committed member of his local church. He loves the beach, good food and coffee and watching sports. With a Canadian background, he is a serious baseball fan.

Mr Ben Peacock was a well-known Maths Teacher even before he began at NGS due to his online teaching presence.



I am thankful to work with highly qualified, experienced, and enthusiastic professionals.

CLASS OF 1958: ISABEL HAIGH

MILESTONES + MEMORIES

Isabel Haigh (née Clack) lived with her family at 118 Church Street, and every morning her father would walk her and her sister, Louise, to Church of England Girls' Grammar School (CEGGS), then go on to his office in Bolton Street. In time, her younger brother, Rupert, joined them.

Not long after Isabel began at the School, her family acquired new neighbours in Church Street. A family from Czechoslovakia (displaced by the war) bought

the adjacent house with the intention of opening a restaurant, which they did. Isabel's father was instrumental in helping them obtain a liquor licence and they were very grateful. The restaurant was called The Alcron (the name of a famous restaurant in Prague) and was one of the most popular restaurants in its day.

"It was our second home," Isabel recalled. "We would wander in and out, sampling exotic dishes such as Weiner schnitzel and potato salad,

followed by Chef Charlie's superb continental cakes. Newcastle had never seen such sophistication and The Alcron flourished."

It was the late 1940s. Miss Zoe Martin was the Headmistress of CEGGS then, and her sister, Rita, ran the office. There were strict uniform regulations which were enforced by prefects at the school gate: hats had to have brims turned up all the way around, school jumpers were fine at school but were not to be worn outside school unless covered by the



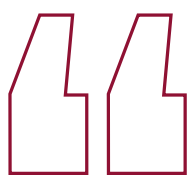
1. Isabel Clack and fellow student Maria Dent, staging a memorable Coronation re-enactment in 1953.
2. Preparing for a performance of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' in the Cathedral Hall, 1956. Back row: Lynette Lingard, Mollie-Anne Marshall, Wendy Marheine. Front row: Isabel Clack, Rosemary Hendry.
3. Isabel Haigh (Class of 1958) visited NGS in 2022 with stories and memories of her time at School.

blazer, and gloves were always to be worn when leaving the grounds.

"There was a bench outside Miss Rita's office, and I was often sitting on it, waiting to be ushered into Miss Martin's inner sanctum for a regular dressing down because of some misdemeanour.

"The high (or low) point of my frequent misbehaviour was in 1953, the year of the Coronation. In Art, we had constructed replicas of the crown jewels used at the Coronation – crown, orb and sceptre. I thought it was a pity not to use them, so I decided I would stage a re-enactment of the Coronation with myself playing the role of the Archbishop of Canterbury. My mother had a splendid gold evening cloak which I borrowed for the occasion.

"We had a full house and everyone had paid 6d to come in; money which I intended keeping for myself. Unfortunately, the whole 'ceremony' was over in about five minutes and I was left with a very unhappy and restless audience. I decided we would finish off with community singing, so led the School in



... I decided I would stage a re-enactment of the Coronation with myself playing the role of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

I've Got a Lovely Bunch of Coconuts, followed by *Yes, We Have No Bananas* and other songs of that era. Happy audience! Miss MD Roberts was Headmistress by this stage, and she was NOT happy. All the money had to be refunded and I am quite sure that if my mother had not been President of the Parents and Friends Association and if my father had not been closely involved with the Cathedral, I would have been sentenced to even more weeks of detention than the fortnight I had to endure."

Following her 'success' with community singing, Isabel entered a talent contest run by radio station 2KO. The sponsor was the Victor Ice Cream Company and prizes were blocks of ice cream, then packaged in waxed cardboard. Isabel sang a rousing rendition of *I Didn't Know the Gun was Loaded* and received a large block of vanilla ice-cream. However, she

had performed while wearing school uniform and once again Miss Roberts was displeased. Isabel went on to win the prestigious Royal Empire Society Public Speaking Competition – on more than one occasion. "I recall that as a 14-year-old I addressed their annual luncheon in City Hall and the subject of my winning speech was 'The Extension of Self-Government to Dependent Peoples Within the British Empire'. My parents were beaming with pride. At last, their troublesome daughter was the centre of attention for all the right reasons – for a short time anyway."

"I was a child who liked the sound of her own voice, refused to ever let a teacher have the last word and had a dislike of authority. Amazingly I lasted at school until 1958 when I completed the Leaving Certificate. I have no doubt there was a collective sigh of relief as the school gates closed behind me!"

IN MEMORIAM



Summer Lockley née Arathoon
(Class of 1995).

Remembering Summer Lockley, who lost her battle with breast cancer in October 2021, aged 44.

Summer's warmth, humour and vivaciousness endeared her to many across all years. Her favourite subjects were English and History, and outside the classroom she enjoyed softball and SATU. Summer delighted in her role as School Captain and was the recipient of awards for character and influence, and public speaking.

Following graduation and a gap year in the UK, she commenced a career in radio and television, working at 2HD Newcastle, Hot Tomato, Sea FM and 7News on the Gold Coast and Channel 9 Brisbane.

Remembered as a loving daughter, sister, friend, wife and mother, Summer is survived by husband Damien, and sons Jaydon and Timothy.

ALUMNI REUNIONS

ALUMNI

Generations of Newcastle Grammar School students reunited at a back-to-school event in October.

Current students delighted in welcoming past students and staff to Hill Campus for a tour and much reminiscing and re-connecting. For many, a lot had changed, but there was great joy in recognising familiar faces.

Separate year level reunions continued off site into the evening, including a 30 Year Reunion for the Class of 1990, a 20 Year Reunion for the Class of 2002 and a 10 Year Reunion for the Class of 2010. Thank you to those who contributed to the success of the day and various events.





“ ... there was great joy in recognising familiar faces.



WELLBEING FOR BREAKFAST

COMMUNITY

Newcastle Grammar School placed wellbeing on the breakfast menu in 2022. Our three Wellbeing for Breakfast events invited community and business members to learn about the science of wellbeing and how to grow from functioning to flourishing.

Head of Positive Education, Ms Marnie Thomas, and Deputy Head of School, Dr Alan Parsons, shared many ways that organisations can embrace the practices and principles of positive psychology to help their people to flourish.

The first breakfast focused on what wellbeing is, the importance of wellbeing literacy and adopting a shared language, the conditions for workplace engagement, the relationship between subjective wellbeing and success, and the power of gratitude. This was followed up at the second event with a deep dive into Wellbeing Theory, the significance of developing a wellbeing framework and the science of character strengths. Our final breakfast in the series was a workshop that encouraged guests to engage in activities, conversation and fun, providing practical wellbeing



strategies to implement in the workplace and at home.

Thank you to all the business and community members who joined us over the last three terms, eager to learn more about wellbeing in the workplace and how we can all work together to thrive.

Starting our day with a strong coffee is not enough — let's start the day with Wellbeing for Breakfast!

In addition to the local Wellbeing for Breakfast events, Ms Marnie Thomas

was invited to speak about the series at a workshop at the PESA (Positive Education Schools Association) Australasian Wellbeing in Education Conference held in Sydney in October. This highlighted one of the many interventions we have created to embed wellbeing science not only into our daily practice for students, but to share it with the wider community. NGS is very proud to be a Positive Education and Visible Wellbeing School creating a positive ripple effect in our local community and beyond.

1. Dr Alan Parsons (pictured) and Ms Marnie Thomas presented at the first Wellbeing for Breakfast held at Noah's on the Beach.
2. Ms Belinda Nichols, Professor Lea Waters, Dr Alan Parsons, Mrs Anne Johnstone – Principal of Ravenswood School for Girls, Ms Marnie Thomas and Ms Deidre Lau at the Australasian Wellbeing in Education Conference in October.



“ The new Strategic Plan focuses on further development of our student wellbeing model and staff growth ...





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